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REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated March 3, 2006. Claims 1-33 are pending, with claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 being in independent form. By this Amendment, independent claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 have been amended to clarify the claimed invention, without introducing any new subject matter or any new issues.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 9-14, 18-22, 25 and 31-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,052,445 to Bashoura et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,437,871 to Yuki. Claims 3, 4, 7, 8, 15-17, 21, 23-25, 29 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura in view of Yuki and U.S. Patent No. 5,381,527 to Inniss et al. Claim 26 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura. Claims 27 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura in view of Inniss.

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

The present application is directed to improvements for network facsimile operations, including providing input means for operator input, for each destination, plural address information corresponding to plural respective communication modes (for example, an electronic mail address, an IP address for real time Internet communication and a telephone number for facsimile communication through a public network, etc.) for transmitting the document image information to the destination, and for designating one address among the plurality of addresses to which the document image information is to be transmitted, wherein the operator uses the input means to (i) designate one of the plurality of destinations, (ii) select any one of the plurality

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of communication modes available for communicating through the network facsimile device with the designated destination, and (iii) then request that the image information be transmitted to the corresponding address of the designated destination through the selected communication mode. Each of independent claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 addresses these features, as well as additional features.

Bashoura, as understood by Applicant, proposes a fax director device which can be connected through a cable to a conventional facsimile machine. A user uses the facsimile machine in a conventional manner (that is, the user believes the fax will be transmitted through a telephone line). The fax director decodes the destination telephone number which is encoded by the fax machine in the facsimile transmission, and then compares the decoded telephone number to a look-up table. If an Internet address corresponding to the decoded telephone number is found in the table, the fax is converted to a computer file, and then sent to the matched Internet address.

Contrary to the contention in the Office Action, the user is not presented with a choice of selecting any one of plural communication modes. As far as the user is aware, the fax is being transmitted in the conventional manner through a telephone line.

Yuki, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a facsimile apparatus which stores for each destination a telephone number, an IP address and cost information. When the user selects a destination for a facsimile, a CPU automatically determines the cheapest communication mode for transmitting the facsimile to the destination, and transmits the facsimile to the destination via the cheapest communication mode. The communication mode is not selected by the user.

Inniss was cited only against dependent claims in the present application.

Applicant does not find disclosure or suggestion in the cited art, however, of a network

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facsimile device which comprises input means for operator input of information identifying a plurality of destination addresses, including for each destination a plurality of address information respectively corresponding to the plurality of communication modes, and for designating one address among the plurality of addresses to which the document image information is to be transmitted, wherein an operator uses the input means to (i) designate one of the plurality of destinations, (ii) select any one of the plurality of communication modes available for communicating through the network facsimile device with the designated destination, and (iii) then request that the image information be transmitted to the corresponding address of the designated destination through the selected communication mode, as provided by the claimed invention of amended claim 1 of the present application.

Independent claims 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 are patentably distinct from the cited art for at least similar reasons.

Accordingly, for at least the above-stated reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentable over the cited art.

In view of the amendments to the claims and remarks hereinabove, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance, and earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is

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respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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